

# LAVENDER<sup>®</sup>



## 2016 FALL ARTS & DINING ISSUE

555

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SEPTEMBER 1-14, 2016

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#### ON THE COVER

Cast members from *Cabaret* would like to "Willkommen" you to the 2016 Fall Arts & Dining Issue. Photo by Joan Marcus

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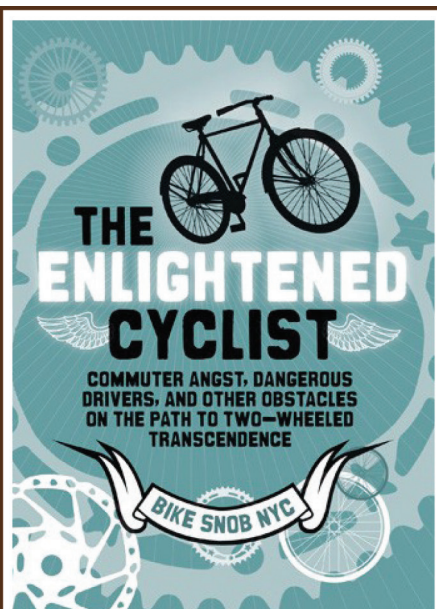
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# See Me, Feel Me



Minnesota Marine Art Museum. Photo by Andy Lien



Franconia Sculpture Park. Photo by Andy Lien

The arts. Crucial and omnipresent aspects of our civilizations for all of time. May we experience them, may we fight for them, may we be makers of them. In this issue, we put the primary focus on the performing arts, but I'd like to offer up a couple arts and dining pairings for the visual arts. They're ones that are a bit further out of grasp from the Twin Cities and oh-so-worth the drive. To quote The Who, they're all about "See Me, Feel Me."

## Minnesota Marine Art Museum, Winona, Minnesota [www.mmam.org](http://www.mmam.org)

We are well aware of how fortunate we are in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area to have a multitude of masterpieces in our midst, not to mention the bevy of all other artwork that hasn't been given the label "masterpiece." But what is not as known is that there is a surprising number of masterpieces in the most impressive museum in Winona, Minnesota. The Minnesota Marine Art Museum houses a collection of work from the Hudson River School as well as a stymying number of pieces of Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Modernism, and Realism by names such as Picasso, Van Gogh, Monet, Gauguin, Cézanne, O'Keeffe, Cassatt, Homer, Wyeth, and more. Among other exhibits, a special collection will be showing until Nov. 3: "150 Years of Marine Art." And, for the more ink-inclined among us, there's a particularly interesting exhibit that's singing its siren song to me showing through Dec. 4 called "Ink & Water: Sailors' Tattoos."

## Restaurant Pairing: Chef Shack Bay City, Bay City, Wisconsin [www.chefshackranch.com/bay-city](http://www.chefshackranch.com/bay-city)

No, it's not in Winona. It's not even close to Winona. But, in my world, it's *on the way* to Winona. So, to get to Winona from the Twin Cities, you have to go south and east. Winona's on the river, in Minnesota. What you could do is cross that river to Wisconsin and go down to Winona on that side in order to grab brunch from the good people at Chef Shack Bay City, led by Carrie Summer and Lisa Carlson. I have had a number of wonderful meals there and can vouch for what a solid and enjoyable beginning of your trip along the waterways, both literal and artistic, this will be.

## Franconia Sculpture Park, Shafer, Minnesota [www.franconia.org](http://www.franconia.org)

We know and love our sculpture parks and gardens around here. Caponi Art Park is a delight and the Walker Sculpture Garden is iconic, though under construction for the time being. Venture a little bit east and you will find an oasis of art called Franconia Sculpture Park. Free to all, it's a place where you can park and wander for hours, walking between sculptures that range from a lizard-snack-bar to a pit of broken glass to a tower of stacked boats to a (seemingly) buried house to a pyramid of taxidermied deer. Adults and kids can go climbing on some of the pieces and take some time to watch some of the artists in residence do their work in the area set aside for their outdoor workshops. Be sure to check on any performances or exhibits scheduled to happen at Franconia; I'm sad to be out of town for the drumming and dancing headlined by Mu Daiko that'll be happening there while this issue is being published.

## Restaurant Pairings: Marine General Store [www.marinegeneralstore.com](http://www.marinegeneralstore.com) St. Croix Chocolate Company [www.stcroixchocolateco.com](http://www.stcroixchocolateco.com)

I usually take the scenic route to Franconia by going first to Stillwater and then going north to Franconia and the Taylors Falls area. Food options are plentiful, no matter how you approach it: Eichten's from the west, Taylor's Falls from the north, any of the restaurants in Stillwater from the south; but I prefer a grab-and-go option from two fine purveyors of food in Marine on St. Croix, between Stillwater and the sculpture park. The Marine General Store has various sundries for purchase, but proceed directly to the deli case and order up some sandwiches. I recommend anything that you can add the olive spread to, which is anything. Then, walk up the street and nab a few lovely chocolates for dessert from St. Croix Chocolate Company, headed by Robyn Dochterman and Deidre Pope, and you've got a picnic that will make the other brown-bag lunchers at Franconia jealous.

Enjoy this issue. See and read about what your arts community is creating and bringing to you to consume as the heartbeat of our culture. Be hungry for it and demand more, while also supporting this good and crucial work.

With you and with thanks,  
Andy ■



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# America's Black Olympians: I

Mighty deeds were done in Rio's Summer Olympics, many by black women athletes of Team USA, in what one source termed "usually predominantly white sports." Unfortunately, there are shameful historical reasons, notably swimming, for white predominance.

There is not room here to delve into that history, but all of these young women, as indicated by their post-win statements, strove not only for themselves and the Team, but for the hopes of youngsters, girls of color, looking to their future with hope.

Twenty-year-old Simone Manuel, the first black woman to win a gold medal in an individual swim event, reacted with tears and wonder. Fully aware of the longstanding barriers between blacks and pool access, Manuel said, "This win hopefully brings hope and change to some of the issues that are going on. My color just comes with the territory."

Simone Biles' gymnastic feats accrued four golds and a bronze, including the women's individual all-around. Usually bright and smiling, Biles delivered her take on the omnipresent sexist press coverage, stating, "I'm not the next Usain Bolt or Michael Phelps. I'm the first Simone Biles."

Michelle Carter, 30, was the first American to win a gold in the women's shot put, an event open only to men until 1948. Tall, full-figured, a professional makeup artist, Carter is a self-described "diva" who loves clothes and glitter and is a spokeswoman for positive body image. As she said, women can throw heavy (8.8-lb) balls and be in the dirt and "we can look good while we're doing it."

Carter is responsible for her win, but she had a sterling mentor: dad Michael took home a silver in the event in 1984 in Los Angeles. His daughter now grins: "Of course, I can't wait until I get the medal and I can walk around the house and say, 'Daddy, I got you!'"

Sabre fencer Ibtihaj Muhammed, 30, an African American Muslim, became the first U.S. athlete to compete at the Olympic Games wearing a hijab. Garnering bronze, she reported the joy of being "able to stand on top of that podium and represent our country, and to show...girls out there... our youth out there, that they can accomplish anything."

With all the praise due these women, Muhammed's word "our" is the one to keep in mind: "our country," "our youth." American strength and unity come through embracing all our citizens. ■



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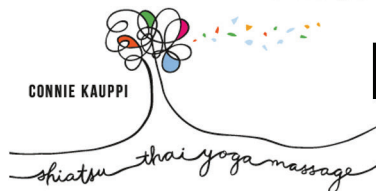
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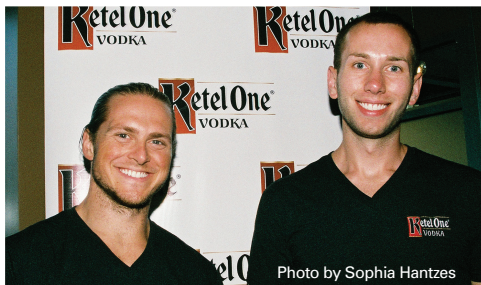
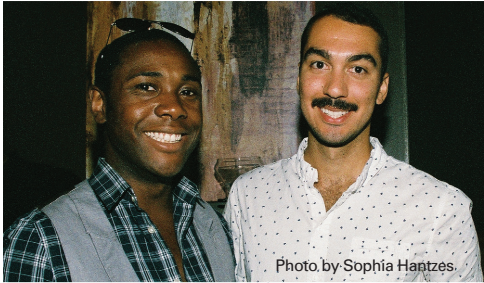
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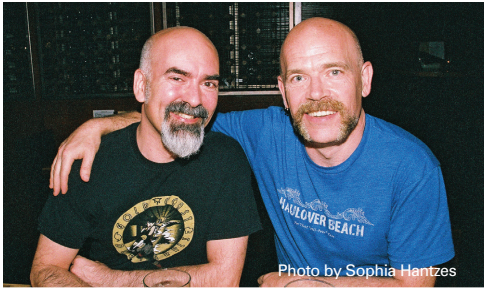
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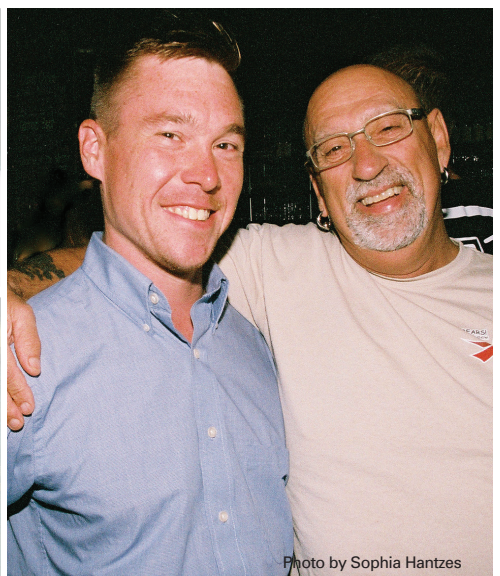
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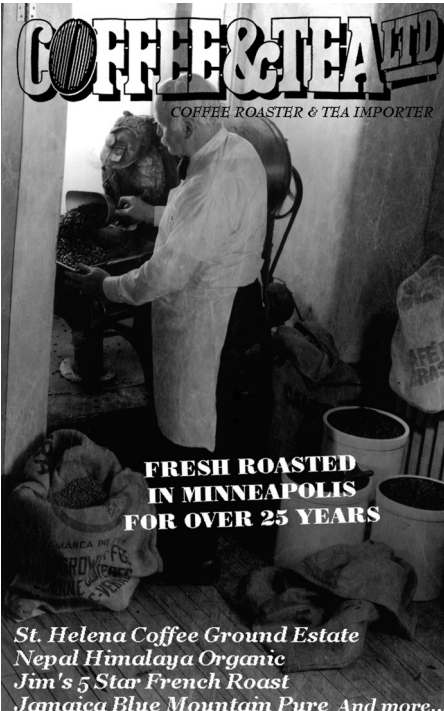
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# 2016 FALL ARTS & DINING PAIRINGS

Produced by Linda Raines & Shane Lueck  
Arts Pairings by John Townsend & Shane Lueck  
Dining Pairings by Bradley Traynor



## Passing Through Pig's Eye

Boss Stage, Park Square Theatre  
[www.parksquaretheatre.org](http://www.parksquaretheatre.org)

Through Sept. 11

This new production by Joe Chvala and the Flying Foot Forum is yet another innovative work by one of the nation's top choreographers. It is also an exploration of St. Paul's past that begins and ends at Park Square Theatre and guides you to various indoor and outdoor downtown locations. You can choose from two separate touring tracks. Percussive dance and rhythms will abound!

—J.T.

## The Drowsy Chaperone

Schneider Theater, Artistry at Bloomington Center for the Arts

[www.artistrymn.org](http://www.artistrymn.org)

Through Sept. 11

Tod Peterson plays the ultimate musical comedy fan. He sheds his sadness when a recording of his favorite Jazz Age musical comes to life. His humble apartment becomes a Broadway stage! Oh how our imagination can rescue us from mundane life! Tony winner for Best Musical.

—J.T.

## Beauty and the Beast

Chanhassen Dinner Theatre  
[www.chanhassentheatre.com](http://www.chanhassentheatre.com)

Through Sept. 24

At this point, everyone is familiar with the story of *Beauty and the Beast*, but there is nothing like a Disney movie brought to life. The Broadway showstopper "Be Our Guest" takes on new meaning as you nosh and take in a top-rate performance.

—S.L.

### RESTAURANT PAIRING:

**The Chanhassen Dinner Theatre**  
[www.chanhassendt.com](http://www.chanhassendt.com)

Perhaps the easiest pairing on the list for obvious reasons, Chanhassen Dinner Theatre takes dinner and a show to a whole new level. Literally. Every time I sit down to enjoy a meal at this classic Twin Cities theater venue, I'm immediately reminded how the food matches the magic happening on stage. Don't miss the Chicken Chanhassen.

## Lady and the Trump

Brave New Workshop  
[www.bravenewworkshop.com](http://www.bravenewworkshop.com)

Through Nov. 5

No matter who the candidates are, no matter what they say, no matter who is elected, only one thing is for certain: everything *will* be satirized in Brave New Workshop's 2016 election show, *Lady and the Trump*.

—S.L.

## 600 Years

Sandbox Theatre  
at The Southern Theater  
[www.southerntheater.org](http://www.southerntheater.org)

Through Oct. 9

This inventive theater troupe excels with imaginative physical theater. Looking 600 years into the future, we see a matriarchal society that has rescued humanity from the brink of extinctions. Bands of women called The Seekers traverse the scarcely populated landscape to reconnect the hemispheres and the human family.

—J.T.



**Bars And Measures.** Photo by Josh Tobiessen

## Bars and Measures

The Jungle Theater  
[www.jungletheater.com](http://www.jungletheater.com)

Through Oct. 9

This play seems right out of today's headlines. The differences between two brothers are the source of drama in a play that has been produced across the country lately. One is a classical pianist and the other plays jazz bass. One is free. The other is in jail. They also practice different religions, Christianity and Islam.

—J.T.

## The Church Basement Ladies in *Rise Up, O Men*

Plymouth Playhouse  
[www.plymouthplayhouse.com](http://www.plymouthplayhouse.com)

Through Nov. 13, 2016 and Jan. 5–April 8, 2017

One of the most popular comedy franchises ever is back again. Sixth in the Church Basement Ladies series, *Rise Up, O Men* returns to those Lutheran ladies who whip up hotdish and coffee for Minnesotans who love their sense of community. Local farmers shake things up when they come down with their traditionally masculine view of things.

—J.T.

## Million Dollar Quartet

Old Log Theater  
[www.oldlog.com](http://www.oldlog.com)

Through Jan. 21, 2017

The dreamiest jam session ever may have occurred at Sun Records storefront studio in Memphis. Johnny

Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, and Elvis Presley were discovered by Sam Phillips, known as The Father of Rock and Roll. This was the only time these men who would be legends actually played together.

—J.T.

## The River

Walking Shadow Theatre Company  
at Open Eye Theatre  
[www.walkingshadowcompany.org](http://www.walkingshadowcompany.org)

Sept. 3–17

Walking Shadow diligently mines the treasure trove of contemporary plays we have yet to see locally. They gave us a visceral production of Jez Butterworth's *Majo* some years back. They now return to another Butterworth play, *The River*, which muses on trout fishing and women who become the object of a mysterious man's eye.

—J.T.

## The Two Kids that Blow Shit Up

Mu Performing Arts  
at Kilburn Arena Theatre  
[www.muperformingarts.org](http://www.muperformingarts.org)

Sept. 9–18

The region's premier theater company for work about Asian and Asian American experiences looks at two people who, at age 10, had parents who began an affair with each other. For 18 years this affects how they see things and partake in life. How does one not fall in love with their best friend?

—J.T.





**The Liar.** Photo by Petronella J. Ytsma



**Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.** Photo by Ron Ravensborg

## The Liar

Proscenium Stage, Park Square Theatre  
[www.parksquaretheatre.org](http://www.parksquaretheatre.org)

Sept. 9–Oct. 2

Seventeenth century French playwright Pierre Corneille was known for his tragedies, but a guy's gotta have some fun sometime! So he wrote the farce, *Le Menteur*, which David Ives' *The Liar* is drawn from. Zach Curtis and Sha Cage lead a fine cast that incorporates contemporary language to suit the play's crazy mix-ups.

—J.T.

## Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Theatre in the Round  
[www.theatreintheround.org](http://www.theatreintheround.org)

Sept. 9–Oct. 2

Minnesota's prolific and outrageously successful playwright, Jeffrey Hatcher, has one actor play Dr. Jekyll. His experiments have triggered his dark side and multiple actors portray the many faces of that unconscious part of his personality; they signify Mr. Hyde. Based on the classic book by Robert Louis Stevenson.

—J.T.

## Sense and Sensibility

Wurtele Thrust Stage, Guthrie Theater  
[www.guthrietheater.org](http://www.guthrietheater.org)

Sept. 10–Oct. 29

Jane Austen. Honestly, does writing get any better? Two sisters in 18th century England are thrown into

chaos when their father's death leaves them in poverty. In a society where love is ruled by money, just how do two broke young women — when the options for women were far, far fewer than they are today — find a way to live with dignity?

—J.T.

## Tegan & Sara in Concert

State Theatre  
[www.hennepintheatretrust.org](http://www.hennepintheatretrust.org)

Sept. 12

Celebrated for their unique ability to amalgamate different genres and cultural forces, this is a band that can perform equally comfortably alongside Katy Perry or Neil Young, Taylor Swift or The Killers. Tegan and Sara are preparing to release their much-anticipated eighth studio album on Warner Bros. Records later this year.

—S.L.

## Elephant & Piggie's We Are in a Play!

Children's Theatre Company  
[www.childrenstheatre.org](http://www.childrenstheatre.org)

Sept. 13–Oct. 23

Complete with the nutty backup singers, The Squeelies, the melodic musings of this dynamic duo make for one grand day as Elephant and Piggie put on a show where we learn the important responsibilities of being a good friend. Based on *The New York Times* best-selling book series by Mo Willems.

—S.L.

## Horidraa: Golden Healing

Ananya Dance Theatre  
 at The O'Shaughnessy at St. Catherine University  
[www.oshag.skate.edu](http://www.oshag.skate.edu)

Sept. 16–17

Choreographer Ananya Chatterjea works with the exquisite dancers of Ananya Dance Theatre to imagine the year 2053. A patient has been checked into urgent medical care in a state of collapse. Her name is given as Ashwarnahm BahrAili KofucheeNané and she self-identifies as "the child of many continents." Follow her journey as she travels into the recesses of memory in a show that explores how women in global communities of color activate hope and healing to sustain communities around the world.

—S.L.

## Home Street Home: Minneapolis

Bedlam Theater  
 at Dowling Studio, Guthrie Theater  
[www.guthrietheater.org](http://www.guthrietheater.org)

Sept. 16–25

The grass roots populist Bedlam Theater dramatizes an intense inquiry into homelessness in Minneapolis, where the divisions between rich and poor are jolting. And where the current housing crisis is not the favorite topic of local politicians. Street musician Zeke Cooper tours the town and eavesdrops on many walks of life.

—J.T.



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**The Realistic Joneses.** Photo by Petronella J. Ytsma

## The Children

Pillsbury House Theatre  
www.pillsburyhouseandtheatre.org  
Sept. 16ñOct. 16

Euripedes' timeless tragedy of the enraged mother, Medea, is the inspirational source for this mix of live action and puppetry as we reflect on contemporary social crises. Pillsbury House Theatre continuously presents socially conscious work that excels with high standards.

—J.T.

## Death of a Salesman

Yellow Tree Theatre  
www.yellowtreetheatre.com  
Sept. 16ñOct. 16

This Arthur Miller masterpiece is a definitive statement on the instability of the American dream and the illusions and delusions we foster in service of it. Tragic everyman, Willy Loman, is especially relevant today as the problem of aging out of employment possibilities is at crisis level.

—J.T.

## Ragtime

Theater LattE Da  
at The Ritz Theater  
www.theaterlatteda.com  
Sept. 21ñOct. 23

Based on E.L. Doctorow's landmark novel, three distinctly American stories are woven together: a determined Jewish immigrant, a daring Harlem musician, and a woman of privilege, united by their courage, compassion, and belief in a better tomorrow.

*Ragtime* was nominated for 13 Tony Awards and was awarded Best Book and Best Score.

—S.L.

## Broadway Songbook: REBELS! on Broadway

Ordway Center for the Performing Arts  
www.ordway.org  
Sept. 23ñ30

Whether dealing directly with racism in shows like *Hamilton*, religion in *The Book of Mormon*, anti-Semitism in *Cabaret*, political corruption in *Fiorella*, or sexuality in *Rent*, Broadway has always been, and will always be, subversive. Broadway Songbook: REBELS! on Broadway will explore the many shows in which Broadway has held a mirror up to society, challenged the status quo, questioned tradition, and, through sheer entertainment, woke us up.

—S.L.

## Queen

In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theatre  
www.hobt.org  
Sept. 23ñOct. 2

The story is situated in the complex magic of one grandmother and the exhausting terrain of her sadness. The loss of her grandson has ruptured in her psyche a lifetime of loss that she has to taste and hold in order to make sense of this newest, unimaginable transition. The emotional heart of the piece is fired by compassion for the death of so many young African Americans at the hand of civil power.

—S.L.



**Queen.** Photo by Stephanie Lynn Rogers



**Broadway Songbook.** Photo by Bernadette Pollard

## Avenue Q

Black Box Theatre, Ames Center  
www.ames-center.com  
Sept. 23ñOct. 16

Puppetry, satire, and an extremely clever score and lyrics parodies *Sesame Street* with clever tunes like "Everyone's a Little Bit Racist" and a reflection of the economic struggles of young people in a not-so-upscale part of the Big Apple. Tony-winner for Best Musical.

—J.T.

## The Realistic Joneses

Boss Stage, Park Square Theatre  
www.parksquaretheatre.org  
Sept. 23ñOct. 16

Park Square continues to ascend as a theater par excellence alongside the *Jungle* in Minneapolis and the *Penumbra* in St. Paul. It also produces new plays to keep us in sync with the times. Acclaimed playwright Will Eno gives us two neighboring couples who reveal inner yearnings and fantasies among themselves.

—J.T.

## The Venetian Twins

Theatre Forever  
at The Southern Theater  
www.southerntheater.org  
Sept. 23ñOct. 16

Mistaken identities are a constant in comedic theater and Carlo Goldoni's 18th-century classic sets the gold standard. It's a fine choice for the playful Theatre Forever. When two estranged twins arrive in town on the same day to win two different hands in marriage, hilarious confusion ensues.

—J.T.





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## 2016 FALL ARTS & DINING PAIRINGS

### Earth Shake

Illusion Theater  
www.illusiontheater.org  
Sept. 24–25

It will be a spectacle. Dance With Love presents a brand new dance show called *Earth Shake*. The creators are former Latin and two-time Russian dance champions, Gene and Elena Bersten, whose Edina dance studio, Dance With Us America, has brought dance vitality to the suburbs.

—J.T.

### Romeo & Juliet

Minnesota Opera  
at Ordway Center for the Performing Arts  
www.mnopera.org  
Sept. 24–Oct. 2

Shakespeare's immortal tale of two young lovers, their relationship forbidden by clannish feuding, who sacrifice everything to be together. French composer Charles Gounod gives a decidedly sumptuous, 19th-century spin to Shakespeare's classic tale of passion and tragedy. Vibrant young singers breathe new life into the world's most famous love story.

—S.L.

#### RESTAURANT PAIRING: Meritage

www.meritage-stp.com

Charles Gounod's *Romeo & Juliet* is every bit as romantic and French as one of my favorite restaurants in St. Paul. Meritage is a perfect first stop for an evening soaked in star-crossed love. A plate of mussels with a loaf of crusty French bread or perhaps the divine chilled lobster will have you uttering, "Wherefore art thou server with more of this amazing food?"

### The Last Firefly

Children's Theatre Company  
www.childrenstheatre.org  
Sept. 27–Nov. 13

It begins with light, then comes a sound, a pulse, a beat, a crash like a giant hammer smashing through the sky. Thus, the story of Boom, the son of Thunder, begins as he sets out on an epic search for his father, ultimately discovering his true self and the strength within him that always existed.

—S.L.

### Barbecue

Mixed Blood Theatre  
www.mixedblood.com  
Sept. 30–Oct. 16

This satirical comedy combines very different styles: Quentin Tarantino-film style and Looney Toons. It skewers misguided assumptions about race, poverty, and class. When a dysfunctional family gathers in a public park for an intervention masquerading as a barbecue you may be stunned by the pill popping, the whiskey swilling, foul mouths, and crack appetite that comes to the foreground.

—J.T.

#### RESTAURANT PAIRING: Smoke in the Pit

www.smokeinthepit.com

To be honest, this pairing was prompted by nothing more high-minded than the word barbecue, itself. I thought, what a great chance to work in one of the best barbecue joints in the Twin Cities. And Smoke in the Pit is just that very place. Grab a slab of ribs, along with a few fixings-to-go and you're golden. Head back home for a little backyard nosh before you head to the Mixed Blood Theatre for the show.

### Lerner & Loewe's Camelot

Chanhasen Dinner Theatre  
www.chanhassentheatre.com  
Sept. 30, 2016–Feb. 25, 2017

Beyond romance, noble quests, and magic spells lie twisted plots, inner demons and betrayal — all threatening to snuff out Arthur's dreams to build the greatest kingdom ever known, one where true justice and compassion reign supreme. The ideals of *Camelot* are ones we long for in our own day, making *Camelot* a hopeful legend for all time.

—S.L.

### Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story

History Theatre  
www.historytheatre.com  
Oct. 1–30

The year is 1959 and we see the emergence of 15-year-old singer Bobby Vee from Fargo as he wows the audience at the Winter Dance Party in Moorhead. He soon records his first hit single in Minneapolis, "Suzie Baby," and would become a teen idol to elicit screams on *American Bandstand*. His Top 40 hits included "Devil or Angel" and "The Night Has A Thousand Eyes."

—J.T.

### The Parchman Hour

McGuire Proscenium Stage, Guthrie Theater  
www.guthrietheater.org  
Oct. 1–Nov. 6

The title refers to a nightly variety show staged by civilly disobedient protesters after being arrested, then imprisoned. This civil rights era play captures the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 →



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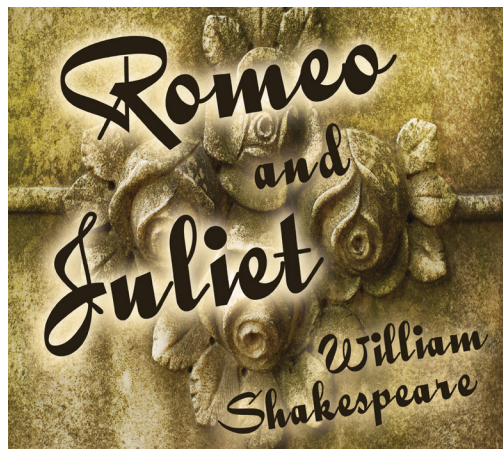
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**Stomp.** Photo by Junichi Takahashi



**Romeo & Juliet.** Artwork courtesy of Theatre in the Round



**An Evening with David Sedaris.**  
Illustration courtesy of Hennepin Theatre Trust

united front that people of different backgrounds and ages formed to counter the negativity at Mississippi's Parchman Farm Penitentiary. The prison system of the south has long been severely criticized and nowadays incarceration across the entire nation has come to be severely criticized.

—J.T.

## Hold These Truths

Dowling Studio, Guthrie Theater  
[www.guthrietheater.org](http://www.guthrietheater.org)

Oct. 7–23

Did you know that the most liberal presidential administration in history enacted and enforced perhaps the most racist act since slavery? During World War II, American citizens of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated in prisoner of war camps on American soil. This play delves into a young Seattle man's journey to come to terms with this disgrace which was finally named as the evil it was by President Reagan.

—J.T.

## Bianca Del Rio: Not Today Satan

Pantages Theatre  
[www.hennepintheatretrust.org](http://www.hennepintheatretrust.org)

Oct. 8

Fans packed the theater last time she was in town and now she's back! The hilariously hateful comic known as Bianca Del Rio (aka Roy Haylock) is launching the North American leg of her latest global standup tour. *Not Today Satan* picks up right where she left off, chronicling her adventures since winning a certain well-known drag-focused reality show, becoming "gay famous," moving to Los Angeles and the inherent challenges of dating and making a living as a man in a dress.

—S.L.

## Jitney

Penumbra Theatre  
[www.penumbrateatre.org](http://www.penumbrateatre.org)

Oct. 13–Nov. 6

This is one of those "I Can't Wait!" revivals. Finally, the nation's flagship African American theater company revives their production of the eighth in the Pittsburgh Cycle of the pre-eminent African American playwright, August Wilson. Set in 1997 at a cab stand, we see how real estate development threatens a community. A timely issue indeed, no matter what your skin color.

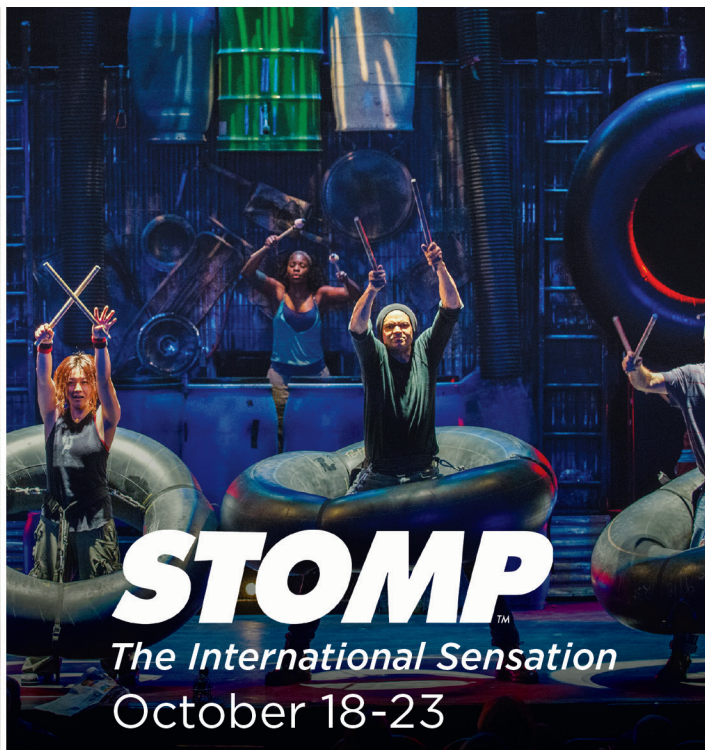
—J.T.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 →



**The House on Mango Street.** Photo courtesy of Park Square Theatre





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## The LIAR



*Double meanings, mistaken identities, and gut busting lies.*

**SEPT 9 – OCT 2**

Proscenium Stage / Comedy / Area Premiere

## The Realistic JONESES



*Samuel Beckett meets Seinfeld*

**SEPT 23 – OCT 16**

Andy Boss Thrust Stage / Comedy-Drama / Area Premiere

in photos - The Liar: Zach Curtis\* and Shá Cage\*; The Realistic Joneses: Angela Timberman\* and JC Cutler\* (\*member, actors' equity association)



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**Cabaret.** Photo by Joan Marcus

## Romeo & Juliet

Theatre in the Round  
[www.theatreintheround.org](http://www.theatreintheround.org)  
 Oct. 14–Nov. 6

It is probably the most popular play ever and still looms as a consummate statement about forbidden love. As we commemorate the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death, it is a fitting choice by a top-notch theater troupe committed to classics.

—J.T.

## Cabaret

Orpheum Theatre  
[www.hennepintheatretrust.org](http://www.hennepintheatretrust.org)  
 Oct. 18–23

*Cabaret* has made an indelible impact on musical theatre. The undeniable power of this musical lies in the universal question it poses: why do we again and again allow destructive powers to take control of society? As life in pre-WWII Germany grows more and more uncertain, will the decadent allure of Berlin nightlife be enough to get Sally Bowles, the Emcee, and everyone else at the Kit Kat Klub through the dangerous times? Come hear some of the most memorable songs in theatre history, including "Cabaret," "Willkommen," and "Maybe This Time."

—S.L.

### RESTAURANT PAIRING:

#### Smack Shack at 1029

[www.the1029bar.com](http://www.the1029bar.com)

It's not the Kit Kat Klub of pre-WWII Berlin, but it's got the grit and character of a storied ale house nonetheless. Best of all, the 1029 Bar has a whole menu of Smack Shack's decadent dining delights to set the stage for an evening of epic indulgence. Lobster rolls and Sally Bowles, what more do you need in life?

## Stomp

Ordway Center for the Performing Arts  
[www.ordway.org](http://www.ordway.org)  
 Oct. 18–23

When *Stomp* takes the stage, everything becomes an instrument. This inventive and invigorating show has been fusing dance, music, comedy, and theatrical performance to create thunderous rhythms and electrifying beats for over 25 years. The performers have traveled around the world, proving that with the right combination of creativity, imagination, and resourcefulness, you can create extraordinary art from even the most ordinary things.

—S.L.

## Custodians of Beauty

McGuire Theatre, Walker Art Center  
[www.walkerart.org](http://www.walkerart.org)  
 Oct. 20–22

Choreographer Pavel Zúšťak and his Palissimo Company examine beauty and its intrinsic relationship with art through what is described as minimalist movement, sensuous abstraction, and potent stage imagery drawn from an Eastern European dance-theater aesthetic.

—S.L.

## The House on Mango Street

Proscenium Stage, Park Square Theatre  
[www.parksquaretheatre.org](http://www.parksquaretheatre.org)  
 Oct. 21–22

Growing up young and Latina in Chicago. That struggle is conveyed in this stage adaptation of the Sandra Cisneros book. Young Esperanza discovers that writing might be her ticket to get beyond the poverty and street life that cloud her life. These vignettes may inspire some of us to reach beyond what we think of as limits.

—J.T.

## The Baker's Wife

Schneider Theater, Aristry at Bloomington Center for the Arts  
[www.aristrymn.org](http://www.aristrymn.org)  
 Oct. 22–Nov. 12

Stephen Schwarz is known for such milestones as *Godspell*, *Pippin*, and *Wicked*. However, *The Baker's Wife* is one of his less-produced musicals, though it has gained cult classic status. When a baker's wife is seduced away from her new husband, a beloved village baker, he loses his will to bake. His personal breakdown triggers a local hunger crisis.

—J.T.

### RESTAURANT PAIRING:

#### A Baker's Wife

[www.facebook.com/aBakersWife](http://www.facebook.com/aBakersWife)

South Minneapolis isn't quite Bloomington and a bakery isn't the typical pre-show nosh spot. Still, when I read the synopsis of *The Baker's Wife*, I felt compelled to urge a trip to one of my favorite neighborhood bakeries. Grab a tea cake or any of a number of fresh, scratch-made donuts perfect for a snack on your way to the show or a post-theater coffee klatsch.

## An Evening with David Sedaris

State Theatre  
[www.hennepintheatretrust.org](http://www.hennepintheatretrust.org)  
 Oct. 28

Much of Sedaris' humor is autobiographical and self-deprecating, and often concerns his family life, Greek heritage, homosexuality, jobs, education, drug use, and obsessive behaviors, and his life in France, London, and the English South Downs. *The New York Times* best-selling author and National Public Radio humorist returns by popular demand for his annual visit to the State Theatre.

—S.L.





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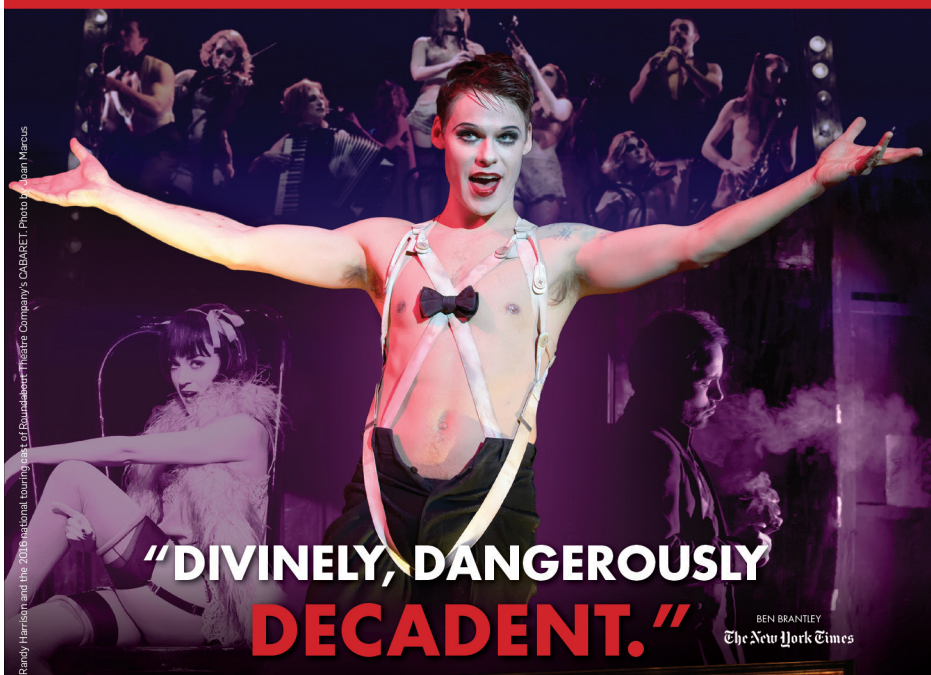
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*A Raisin in the Sun*. Photo courtesy of Park Square Theatre

### A Raisin in the Sun

Boss Stage, Park Square Theatre  
www.parksquaretheatre.org

Oct. 28–Nov. 20

Lorraine Hansberry's masterpiece is referred to as *The Great African American Play* and *The Great American Play*. Whatever you want to call it, *A Raisin in the Sun* is a milestone about a family's intergenerational conflicts and how discrimination is systematized into American society.

—J.T.

### Jèrôme Bel: Gala

McGuire Theatre, Walker Art Center  
www.walkerart.org

Nov. 1–2

Celebrate Minnesota's own diverse community as radical dance master Jérôme Bel gleefully and convincingly makes the case that all bodies and movement are meaningful and joyous when danced with conviction and viewed with an open spirit.

—S.L.

### Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

Chameleon Theatre Circle and Theatre Uncorked at Black Box Theatre, Ames Center  
www.ames-center.com

Nov. 4–20

Chameleon Theatre Circle and the aptly named Theatre Uncorked co-produce Edward Albee's classic dark comedy about an intergenerational get-together between two married couples where the booze flows far too freely. A timeless examination of mismatched spouses, broken lives, and dreams that seem impossible to fulfill.

—J.T.

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## Octet and Killer Pig

James Sewell Ballet  
at The O'Shaughnessy at St. Catherine University  
www.jsballet.org  
Nov. 4ñ6

Felix Mendelssohn's *Octet for Strings in E-flat Major, Op. 20* is a work of great emotional range and scope that sings and soars. *Killer Pig* was created by choreographers Sharon Eyal and Gai Behar; a choreographic language that is both full of passion and amazingly delicate, presented with intensely uncompromising honesty and physicality.

—S.L.

## The Oldest Boy

The Jungle Theater  
www.jungletheater.com  
Nov. 4ñDec. 18

Master comedic playwright Sarah Ruhl shows what happens when an American mother must deal with her son, who is thought to be the reincarnation of a high Buddhist Lama. A crisis erupts when Tibetan monks ask to take him away from her and her Tibetan husband. Will they get to take him to India for spiritual training?

—J.T.



Cinderella.  
Photo by Dan Norman

## Cinderella

Children's Theatre Company  
www.childrenstheatre.org  
Nov. 8, 2016ñJan. 8, 2017

CTC's *Cinderella* has worked its way into the hearts of audiences and the magical, fantastical, and all-too-hilarious *Cinderella* returns to the stage for their holiday season. Freshly updated with all new songs, gags, and mayhem, you'll jeer at the deliciously dysfunctional stepmother and sisters as much as you'll cheer for Cinderella.

—S.L.

## RESTAURANT PAIRING:

### The Black Forest Inn

www.blackforestinnmpls.com

The German roots of one of our favorite fairy tales makes a pre-show dinner at the Black Forest particularly perfect. Aschenputtel herself would feel right at home amongst the bratwurst, spaetzle and sauerbraten.

## Five

20% Theatre Company Twin Cities  
at Dreamland Arts  
www.fctwentypercent.org  
Nov. 11ñ30

A collaborative work from one of the area's top queer theater groups looks at being five years old, learning how to lie and how to count beer bottle caps. Clearly, a questionable environment for a child. Gender roles, queer identity, family fragility, and abuse intersect in a statement about trust and childhood.

—J.T.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34 ➔

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**Octet.** Photo by Sara Rubinstein

## Orange

Mixed Blood Theatre  
www.mixedblood.com  
Nov. 11 ñ Dec. 4

Mixed Blood Theater has been a solid producer of plays about persons dealing with disabilities. A young woman on the autism spectrum goes on a joyride the night before a family wedding with her cousin and the cousin's boyfriend. That night becomes a look into fear, family, and being different.

—J.T.

## A Gone Fishin' Christmas

Yellow Tree Theatre  
www.yellowtreetheatre.com  
Nov. 11 ñ Dec. 23

Jessica Lind Peterson's brand new comedy will light up Osseo this holiday season. Two sisters go home to Duluth to catch big ones at the Northland's biggest ice fishing contest. But an unseasonably warm winter threatens to break apart the ice. Complete with sled dogs!

—J.T.

## Das Rheingold

Minnesota Opera  
at Ordway Center for the Performing Arts  
www.mnopera.org  
Nov. 12 ñ 20

*Das Rheingold* begins the epic cycle of the ring. This tale of seduction, deception, and betrayal features the Minnesota Opera Orchestra on stage as a dramatic central character, and is reimagined with innovative video and staging.

—S.L.

## A Christmas Carol

Wurtele Thrust Stage, Guthrie Theater  
www.guthrietheater.org  
Nov. 16 ñ Dec. 30

No show gets the true spirit of Christmas as soulfully and fulfilling as a great stage version of the Charles Dickens classic. The emotional deadliness that comes from greed and lack of empathy is annually given a mega-popular and splendidly powerful production at the nation's flagship regional theater.

—J.T.

## Away in the Basement

Plymouth Playhouse  
www.plymouthplayhouse.com  
Nov. 16 ñ Dec. 31

Once again, this holiday favorite takes us back to 1959 on the day of the Sunday school Christmas program. The Lutheran ladies are tending to goodie bags and the pieces for the nativity scene. However, when trouble unexpectedly arises, they must step up to the plate!

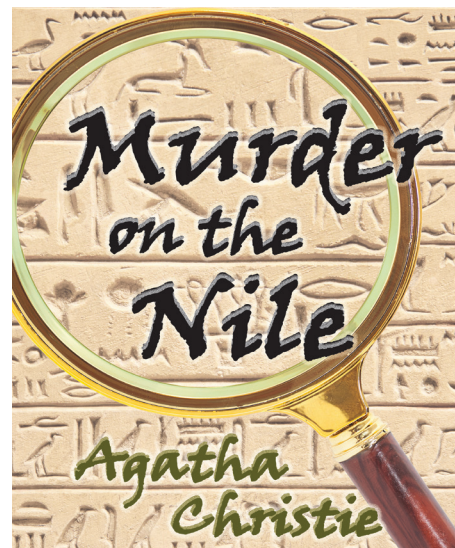
—J.T.

## Crazy Glue

Single Shoe Productions  
at The Southern Theater  
www.southerntheater.org  
Nov. 17 ñ 20

Sometimes no words say it all. Through physical comedy, mime, and a 1930s soundtrack, a happy couple seems to have it all with a car, plenty of food, and a kid on the way. But *Crazy Glue* asks if these are enough to make a relationship and a family successfully work.

—J.T.



## Murder on the Nile.

Artwork courtesy of Theatre in the Round



**Orange.** Photo by Bonni Allen

## Murder on the Nile

Theatre in the Round  
www.theatreintheround.org  
Nov. 18 ñ Dec. 18

Have you considered that Agatha Christie is not far behind the Bible and Shakespeare when it comes to popularity? When a serene cruise is jolted by murder, the usual colorful characters only Dame Agatha could have penned come to life. Produced by a theater that is an old hand at Christie stage classics.

—J.T.

## Orphan Train

History Theatre  
www.historytheatre.com  
Nov. 19 ñ Dec. 18

Between 1858 and 1929 over 100,000 orphan children were shipped by rail to Midwest farm families from the New York City slums. This play looks at some of those who ended up in Minnesota. A stirring folk musical that includes an African American girl who is adopted by a Buffalo Soldier's family.

—J.T.

## The Lion in Winter

McGuire Proscenium Stage, Guthrie Theater  
www.guthrietheater.org  
Nov. 19 ñ Dec. 31

It is Christmas season in the 1180s. Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry II have got marital issues that involve the queen's imprisonment, three ambitious sons, and temperaments that will shape the fate of England. James Goldman's script is juicy and devilishly witty. An ideal classic and classical choice for the Guthrie.

—J.T.





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**WED, MAY 17**  
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Scottish Ballet in Matthew Bourne's  
*Highland Fling* Photo © Andy Ross

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**Nutcracker (not so) Suite.** Photo by Sara Rubinstein

## The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

Orpheum Theatre  
www.hennepintheatretrust.org

Nov. 29–Dec. 4

Mark Haddon's award-winning book became an award-winning play. Fifteen-year-old Christopher stands beside a dead dog, speared with a garden fork. Christopher is under suspicion, but his detective work, forbidden by his father, takes him on a frightening journey that upturns his world.

—S.L.

## A Christmas Carole Petersen

Theater Latté Da  
at The Ritz Theater  
www.theaterlatteda.com

Dec. 1–4

The celebrated holiday comedy returns after a seven-year hiatus. Acclaimed storyteller Tod Petersen reflects on the yuletide season with his family in Mankato, Minnesota, and pays particular tribute to the show's namesake: his mother Carole. Join in the fun for the long-awaited return of this hilarious and heartwarming Latté Da original.

—S.L.

## Different After This

Hipnomyous  
at The Southern Theater  
www.southerntheater.org

Dec. 1–4

The Hipnomyous dancers, or movers if you like, go into the subconscious to manifest ideas into overt physical images. They pride themselves on their unpredictability in their performances. What are called tonal dramatic shifts go through their bodies in a mercurial way. Impulse is central to their approach.

—J.T.

## Black Nativity

Penumbra Theatre  
www.penumbraetheatre.org

Dec. 1–23

Lou Bellamy directs with musical direction by Sanford Moore. Penumbra's *Black Nativity* is a local tradition. This year, especially, you may want to make a special effort to see it as the Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church Choir will sing and TU Dance's brilliant Uri Sands will choreograph.

—J.T.

## Wait Until Dark

Black Box Theatre, Ames Center  
www.ames-center.com

Dec. 2–18

This suspenseful drama broke ground in the 1960s as a play and film that made people painfully aware of the risks experienced by our fellow blind citizens. Set in the '40s in New York City, Susan navigates a horrifying situation in which she must find a way to save herself. It still hits hard all these decades later.

—J.T.

## Nutcracker (not so) Suite

James Sewell Ballet  
at The Cowles Center for Dance & the Performing Arts  
www.jsballet.org

Dec. 2–18

Myron Johnson's holiday favorite returns to the stage, returning *Nutcracker* to a coming-of-age tale much closer to E.T.A. Hoffman's original, grittier story than the Sugar Plum Fairy version many of us know today. The production is full of colorful characters all accompanied by a musical mashup of hip-hop, R&B, contemporary tracks, and Christmas carols.

—S.L.

## RESTAURANT PAIRING:

### Heyday

www.heydayeats.com

Creative, irreverent, and thoroughly contemporary are words well chosen for both parts of this pair. Just as the *Nutcracker (not so) Suite* titillates your visual senses, Heyday will excite pretty much every taste bud in your mouth. And the visual is equally appealing. Fun and whimsy combine to make your night out more than memorable.

## The Soul of Gershwin: The Musical Journey of an American Klezmer

Proscenium Stage, Park Square Theatre  
www.parksquaretheatre.org

Dec. 2–18

Face it. You cannot go wrong with George and Ira Gershwin. Set in the early 20th century in New York City, three singers, a band, and George Gershwin himself express the folk, blues, jazz, Yiddish theatricality, cantor chants, and opera. Relish such tunes as "I Got Rhythm" and "Embraceable You."

—J.T.

## S.H.E. in HerStory

Al Taw'am  
at The Southern Theater  
www.southerntheater.org

Dec. 8–11

Hip-hop dance is the vehicle for telling this story of pain, hope, self-discovery, personal growth, and sisterhood. Dance artist Al Taw'am explores identity and selfhood. A strong example of Southern Theater's commitment to performance work that crosses the boundaries of the status quo.

—J.T.

## White Christmas

Ordway Center for the Performing Arts  
www.ordway.org

Dec. 8–11

Based on the timeless film starring Bing Crosby and Rosemary Clooney, this sparkling musical will dazzle you with big dance numbers and the unforgettable songs of Russian Jewish immigrant, Izzy Baline, better known as Irving Berlin. You'll hear songs like "Blue Skies," "I Love A Piano," "How Deep Is the Ocean," and of course, the perennial favorite, "White Christmas." And, inside the theater, there will be lots and lots of snow!

—S.L.

## RESTAURANT PAIRING:

### Mancini's

www.mancinis.com

What better way to celebrate a Christmas tradition than kick it off with a St. Paul tradition? Since 1948, Mancini's has been a classic steakhouse staple, evoking the same bygone era as the one portrayed in Irving Berlin's nostalgic post-war musical. Surf and turf pairs nicely with the velvety voices of Christmas crooners.

## Fun Home

Orpheum Theatre  
www.hennepintheatretrust.org

Dec. 13–18

Based on Alison Bechdel's best-selling graphic memoir, this groundbreaking and uplifting new musical explores and unravels the many mysteries of childhood and seeing your parents through grownup eyes. *Fun Home* introduces us to Alison at three different ages, as she explores and unravels the many mysteries of her childhood.

—S.L.



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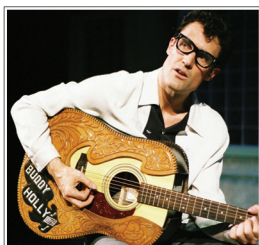


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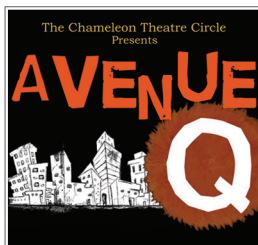
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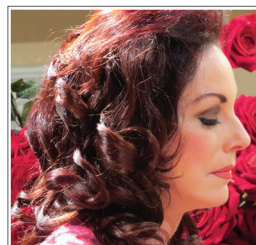
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**Away in the Basement: A Church Basement Ladies Christmas**  
 November 10, 2016  
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 December 3, 2016  
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 December 12, 2016 7:30PM



**Tonic Sol-fa**  
 December 13, 2016 7:30PM



**Rhythmic Circus: Red & Green**  
 December 16-17, 2016  
 7:30PM



**Jim Brickman: Comfort & Joy Holiday Tour**  
 December 29, 2016 7:30PM



**The Magic of Bill Blagg**  
 January 13, 2017  
 7:30PM





**Fun Home.** Photo by Joan Marcus



**The Bodyguard.** Photo by Paul Coltas

## HoliDaydream

Minnesota Dance Collaborative  
at The Southern Theater  
[www.southerntheater.org](http://www.southerntheater.org)  
Dec. 15-18

HoliDaydream is a festive tale of dance and drama told through the eyes of a young girl as she traverses the highs and lows of the holidays through a magical journey. Minnesota Dance Collaborative's dynamic company showcases a multitude of dance styles and entertaining actors for a glamorous holiday experience.

—S.L.

## All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914

Theater Latté Da  
at Pantages Theatre  
[www.theaterlatteda.com](http://www.theaterlatteda.com)  
Dec. 15-18

This year marks the tenth anniversary of this award-winning Theater Latté Da original that has been seen and heard around the globe. This moving work captures an astounding moment in history when Allied and German soldiers laid down their arms to celebrate the holiday together. Poetry, diary entries, official war documents, and letters home are woven together with iconic World War I songs, patriotic tunes, and European Christmas carols to create a truly unique and profound theatrical event.

—S.L.

## Andrew Schneider: You are nowhere

McGuire Theatre, Walker Art Center  
[www.walkerart.org](http://www.walkerart.org)  
Jan. 4-7

A smash hit from New York's downtown theater world, this rapid-fire, high-tech existential meditation teleports from physics lecture to pop culture and personal revelation while dissecting everything from parallel universes to missed connections and AA recovery steps. Andrew Schneider uses an array of electrifying visual and aural effects to produce a shifting landscape of sensory overload.

—S.L.

## The Bodyguard

Orpheum Theatre  
[www.hennepintheatretrust.org](http://www.hennepintheatretrust.org)  
Jan. 10-15

You may recognize *The Bodyguard*'s U.S. tour star, Deborah Cox, from her performance at Twin Cities Pride in 2015 or from her status as an R&B star in her own right. Now Cox is stepping into the role made famous by Whitney Houston. Former Secret Service agent, Frank Farmer, is hired to protect superstar Rachel Marron from an unknown stalker. Each expects to be in charge; what they don't expect is to fall in love.

—S.L.

## Big Money

Boss Stage, Park Square Theatre  
[www.parksquaretheatre.org](http://www.parksquaretheatre.org)  
Jan. 12-28

Game show fans, this is your show! This new Sandbox collaboration is about the ill-fated Michael Larson who won over \$100,000 on *Press Your Luck* in 1984. After recording episodes of the show he discerned and memorized five patterns in the game and was able to predict the results.

—J.T.





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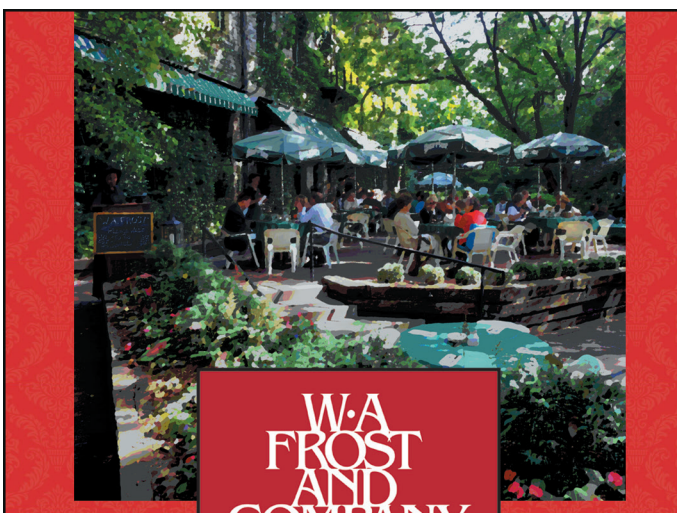


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**Flower Drum Song.** Photo courtesy of Park Square Theatre



**The Pink Unicorn.** Photo by Blythe M. Davis

## A View From the Bridge

Theatre in the Round  
[www.theatreintheround.org](http://www.theatreintheround.org)  
 Jan. 13 ñ Feb. 5

You cannot go wrong with playwright Arthur Miller. It's pretty much settled science that he and Tennessee Williams are the top American playwrights of the mid-20th century. This play has much to say about struggles surrounding immigration and the dreadfully disruptive power of unconscious sexual desire.

—J.T.

## Flower Drum Song

Proscenium Stage, Park Square Theatre  
[www.parksquaretheatre.org](http://www.parksquaretheatre.org)  
 Jan. 20 ñ Feb. 19

Rodgers and Hammerstein created a musical set in San Francisco's Chinatown in the late 1950s. It reflects the process of adapting to the United States as a person from across the Pacific. This new and revised version was written by David Henry Wang (*M. Butterfly*) and his text was nominated for a Tony. Presented by Mu Performing Arts.

—J.T.

## Diana's Garden

Minnesota Opera  
 at Ordway Center for the Performing Arts  
[www.mnopera.org](http://www.mnopera.org)  
 Jan. 21 ñ 29

This opera is a sparkling comedy filled with witty social commentary on freedom and power. Doristo, a shepherd, unexpectedly awakens in a spectacular garden. Amore, the god of desire, informs him that he has been brought there to assist with a plot of revenge — the refuge, overseen by the goddess Diana, is devoted to chastity, which is contrary to Amore's mission of love.

—S.L.

## Little Shop of Horrors

Schneider Theater, Artistry at Bloomington Center for the Arts  
[www.artistrymn.org](http://www.artistrymn.org)  
 Jan. 21 ñ Feb. 19

When a nerdy flower shop assistant named Seymour stumbles across a new breed of plant he names it "Audrey II." Business booms, but when the plant's appetite becomes insatiable, things get monstrously out of hand! Perhaps there has never been a B-movie musical adaptation that became an A-theater event and a doo-wop and R&B musical gem like *Little Shop*.

—J.T.

## The Pink Unicorn

20% Theatre Company Twin Cities  
 at Open Eye Figure Theater  
[www.tctwentypercent.org](http://www.tctwentypercent.org)  
 Jan. 26 ñ Feb. 5

This award-winning solo piece taps into the turmoil a Christian widow living in a conservative Christian town must deal with because of her teenage daughter declaring she is genderqueer. Out of this emerges a chapter of the Gay-Straight Alliance at the local high school.

—J.T.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 42 ➔





noah wolf



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**Nina Simone: Four Women.**  
Photo courtesy of Park Square Theatre



**Mamma Mia!** Photo by Joan Marcus

## The Royal Family

McGuire Proscenium Stage, Guthrie Theater  
[www.guthrietheater.org](http://www.guthrietheater.org)

Jan. 28-March 19

Edna Ferber rates as one of the great female American novelists and it's just not right that people seem to have forgotten about her! Did you know that what's often called the first Great American Musical, *Show Boat*, is based on her novel? Did you know that the 1927 comedy she co-wrote with Georges S. Kaufman is an absolutely fabulous spoof of America's First Family of the Theater: The Barrymores?! That's what's meant by a royal family.

—J.T.

### RESTAURANT PAIRING:

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## Peter and the Starcatcher

Theater Lattē Da  
at The Ritz Theater  
[www.theaterlatteda.com](http://www.theaterlatteda.com)

Feb. 1-March 6

Let your imagination soar in this Peter Pan prequel for grown-ups. Based on the best-selling novel, this comedy explores how a Victorian street urchin ultimately becomes The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up. Follow the nameless orphan and his ambitious friend, Molly, as they protect the world from a greedy band of pirates. Award-winning director and scenic designer Joel Sass takes on this story of unbreakable friendship that places childlike wonder at the heart of grownup theater.

—S.L.

## Black Light

Penumbra Theatre  
[www.penumbraetheatre.org](http://www.penumbraetheatre.org)

Feb. 2-March 12

The charismatic Daniel Alexander Jones is one of the nation's foremost queer-themed performance creators. You will meet Jomama Jones and behold an exploration of song, monologue, diva-ship, and original tunes from the upcoming album, *Flowering*, created with Bobby Halvorsen.

—J.T.

## Coraz Un Eterno (Always in My Heart)

Mixed Blood Theatre  
[www.mixedblood.com](http://www.mixedblood.com)

Feb. 3-March 4

Inspired by *Love in the Time of Cholera* by Nobel Prize winner Gabriel Garcia Marquez, this is a poetic, romantic adventure of love ignited, denied, rekindled, rejected, and renewed; and ultimately of love transforming the human experience. This production deepens and expands Mixed Blood's decades-long dedication to bilingual theater.

—S.L.

## Grace

Yellow Tree Theatre  
[www.yellowtreetheatre.com](http://www.yellowtreetheatre.com)

Feb. 3-March 5

The suburban Yellow Tree Theatre has become a "go-to" place for strong productions of contemporary plays. In *Grace*, destinies collide as a Minnesota couple gears up big plans for opening a motel chain in Florida. Questions of faith and grace plumbed by acclaimed playwright, Craig Wright.

—J.T.

## The Highwaymen

History Theatre  
[www.historytheatre.com](http://www.historytheatre.com)

Feb. 4-March 26

The displacement that comes from urban development is portrayed in this drama where St. Paul's Rondo neighborhood was ripped apart literally and psychologically by the construction of Interstate 94 in 1956. The power dynamics behind the decisions made regarding this are fuel for urgent dramatic conflict even though it is 60 years later. Rondo was the heart of St. Paul's largest African American neighborhood. And urban and road development have become hot button topics over the past few years. Past is prologue.

—J.T.

## Nina Simone: Four Women

Boss Stage, Park Square Theatre  
[www.parksquaretheatre.org](http://www.parksquaretheatre.org)

Feb. 7-March 26

Back by popular demand with added music. This imaginative play with music by Christina Ham muses on the political transformation of singer-songwriter Nina Simone. In a bombed Birmingham church, she encounters three women who illuminate her understandings while she composes "Mississippi Goddam."

—J.T.

### RESTAURANT PAIRING:

**Revival**

[www.revivalmpls.com](http://www.revivalmpls.com)

Just as *Four Women* evokes a strong sense of southern history and struggle, so too does Revival evoke a strong sense of southern culture through food. As a fan of both Nina Simone's soul-healing music and Revival's soul-warming food (soon to have a location in St. Paul in addition to Minneapolis), I can't think of a better marriage for an evening of unrelenting emotion.



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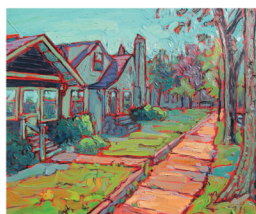
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## 2016 FALL ARTS & DINING PAIRINGS

### Dr. Seuss' The Sneetches ó The Musical

Children's Theatre Company

[www.childrenstheatre.org](http://www.childrenstheatre.org)

Feb. 7ñMarch 26

Some Sneetches have green stars on their bellies while others do not, serving as a source of discrimination until Sylvester McMonkey McBean came to town with a machine to add and remove stars, forcing the Sneetches to question their differences.

—S.L.

### Mamma Mia!

Orpheum Theatre

[www.hennepintheatretrust.org](http://www.hennepintheatretrust.org)

Feb. 7ñ12

*Mamma Mia!* might be embarking on its farewell tour, but this ABBA-laden musical will forever live on in our hearts as the ultimate feel-good experience with a tale of love and laughter. Writer Catherine Johnson's sunny tale unfolds on a Greek island paradise. On the eve of her wedding, a daughter's quest to discover the identity of her father brings three men from her mother's past back to the island they last visited 20 years ago.

—S.L.

### RESTAURANT PAIRING:

#### Upton 43

[www.upton43.com](http://www.upton43.com)

Ah, Sweden. Or shall I say ja, Sverige. Not that you need an excuse to dine at one of the best new restaurants in town, but you've got one nonetheless. If you've yet to enjoy the heavily Swede-forward fare at Upton 43, now's your chance. Combine the best of both Swedish worlds the Twin Cities have to offer: music and food.

### The 39 Steps

Black Box Theatre, Ames Center

[www.ames-center.com](http://www.ames-center.com)

Feb. 10ñ26

A mash-up parody of suspense and comedy best known as one of Alfred Hitchcock's early film gems. The sylvan English countryside is the not-so-innocent setting where a femme fatale, an unsuspecting man, and a vast conspiracy all come together. Postmodern imagination and the classic thriller genre come together in a wonderful way.

—J.T.

### Marie Antoinette

Walking Shadow Theatre Company

at Red Eye Theater

[www.walkingshadowcompany.org](http://www.walkingshadowcompany.org)

Feb. 10ñMarch 4

Walking Shadow gave us a powerful Mary Stuart a few years ago. So it's a good bet that this view of Marie Antoinette will be worth it. Oh how the mighty fall when revolution rears its head. The young French queen's extravagant palatial life is reduced to a soggy dungeon as she awaits the guillotine.

—J.T.

### Bad Dates

Black Box Theater, Artistry at Bloomington Center for the Arts

[www.artistrymn.org](http://www.artistrymn.org)

Feb. 11ñ26

Heartache and hassle makes for comedy in this one-woman show about a successful restaurateur and single mom trying to get back in the swing of dating.

Her enormous collection of shoes and unfortunate encounters seem to point to something gone wrong in her life, but then things shift!

—J.T.

### King Lear

Wurtele Thrust Stage, Guthrie Theater

[www.guthrietheater.org](http://www.guthrietheater.org)

Feb. 11ñApril 2

Plays really don't come any greater than this one. Few plays examine the foolishness of men like this one. It also has three of the most riveting women's roles ever written as three daughters of radically different temperaments handle the egomania of their royal father. But two of them are as cruel as their father is foolish.

—J.T.

### Hedwig and the Angry Inch

Ordway Center for the Performing Arts

[www.ordway.org](http://www.ordway.org)

Feb. 14ñ19

This genre-bending, fourth-wall-smashing musical sensation, with a pulsing score and electrifying performances, tells the story of one of the most unique characters to ever hit the stage. The genderqueer singer, Hedwig, fronts a fictional rock and roll band as they embark on a tour of the U.S., telling her life story through a series of concerts at Bilgewater Inn seafood restaurants. Her tour dates coincide with those of arena-rock star Tommy Gnosis, a wide-eyed boy who once loved Hedwig, but then left with all her songs.

—S.L.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 46 ➔

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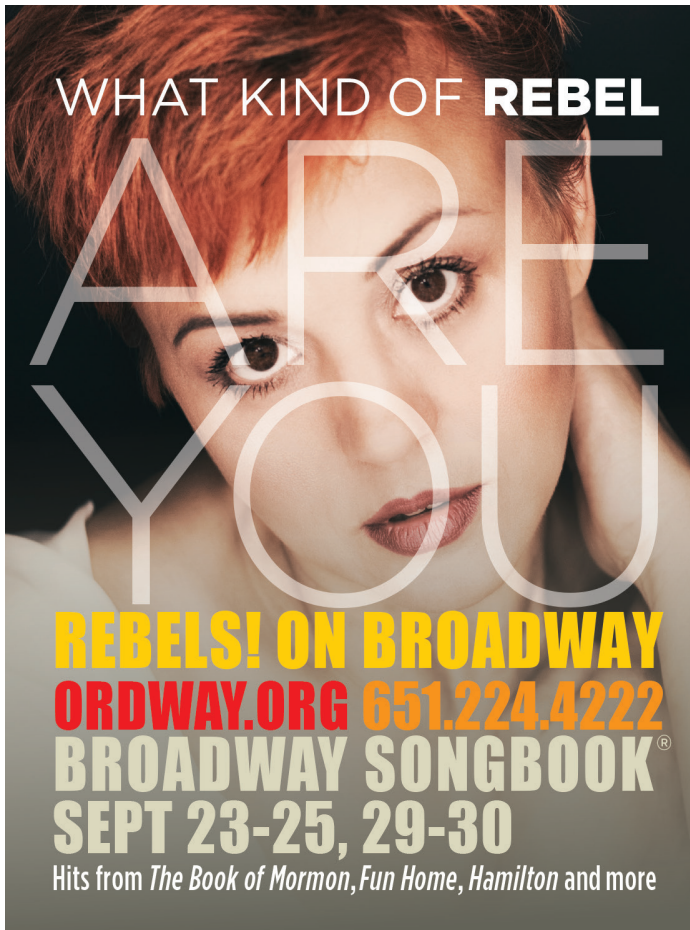
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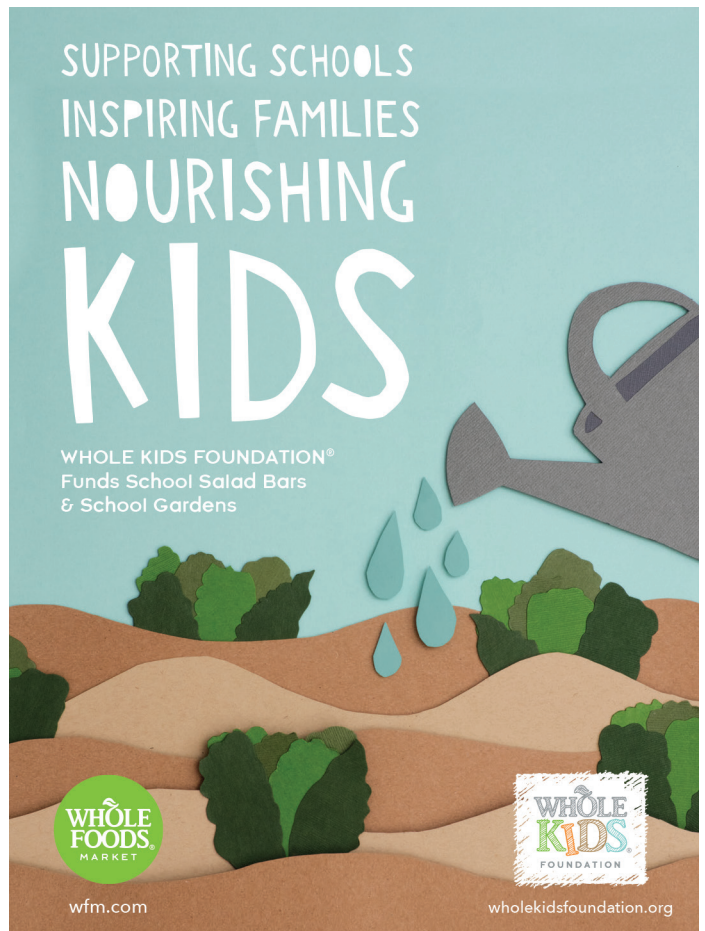
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The King and I. Photo by Paul Kolnik

## RESTAURANT PAIRING:

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## Deathtrap

Theatre in the Round

[www.theatreintheround.org](http://www.theatreintheround.org)

Feb. 17ñMarch 12

Decades ago this Ira Levin thriller was scandalous because it has a central gay relationship. When a playwright tries to surmount writer's block and dwindling success, he takes advantage of a script penned by one of his students. When he invites that student to his home, some eyebrow-raising events take their turns.

—J.T.

## We Are Proud to Present

Dowling Studio, Guthrie Theater

[www.guthrie theater.org](http://www.guthrie theater.org)

Feb. 21ñMarch 12

In this piece, three black and three white American actors rehearse a stage presentation about a genocide in 1900s colonial Africa. They make connections between the past and present issues. Both comedic and dramatic, ideas about race, nationality, ethics, exploitation, and sovereignty are examined.

—J.T.

## The King and I

Orpheum Theatre

[www.hennepintheatretrust.org](http://www.hennepintheatretrust.org)

Feb. 28ñMarch 5

Many adaptations have been made, and rightfully so, for the story is one for the ages. Set in 1860s Bangkok, the musical tells the story of the unconventional and tempestuous relationship that develops between the King of Siam and Anna Leonowens, a British schoolteacher whom the modernist King, in an imperialistic world, brings to Siam to teach his many wives and children.

—S.L.

## RESTAURANT PAIRING:

**Sen Yai Sen Lek**

[www.senyai-senlek.com](http://www.senyai-senlek.com)

Rodgers and Hammerstein's lyrical melodies pair beautifully with the lyrical melodies meted out in the kitchen of one of the Twin Cities' best Thai restaurants. Traditional dishes like nuea yang naam tok and pad bai gra pow certainly tell the tale of Thailand better than any mid-century American musical, no matter how memorable.

## Ballet Works Project

James Sewell Ballet

At The Cowles Center for Dance & the Performing Arts

[www.jsballet.org](http://www.jsballet.org)

March 2ñ5

JSB's annual choreographic laboratory puts the audience at the heart of the creative process. This year's program includes a piece choreographed by local artist Carl Flink of Black Label Movement as well as new work from company members Deanna Gooding and Shohei Iwahama.

—S.L.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 48 ➔

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Ballet Works Project. Photo by Sara Rubinstein

## Safe at Home

Mixed Blood Theatre  
at CHS Field in St. Paul  
[www.mixedblood.com](http://www.mixedblood.com)  
March 7–12

The exploitation of professional sports continues to get a sharp look under the microscope. Eighteen characters reflect problems of U.S. immigration policies and Major League Baseball's misuse of Dominican players. The problem of celebrity, an issue which minority groups, including GLBT folks, have yet to come to terms with, is among the issues probed here. This production will happen at the St. Paul Saints' new minor league stadium.

—J.T.

## Six Degrees of Separation

Theater Latte Da  
at The Ritz Theater  
[www.theaterlatteda.com](http://www.theaterlatteda.com)  
March 8–April 9

Paul, a young black man, convinces a wealthy New York couple, Ouisa and Flan Kittredge, into thinking he is the son of Sidney Poitier. However, Paul's ruse is soon undone leading to discoveries which leave them all forever changed. Nominated for four Tony Awards, *Six Degrees of Separation* is a tragicomedy on race, class, and manners inspired by the real-life con artist David Hampton.

—S.L.

## Dinner at Eight

Minnesota Opera  
at Ordway Center for the Performing Arts  
[www.mnopera.org](http://www.mnopera.org)  
March 11–19

In adapting the depression-era play by George S. Kaufman and Edna Ferber, Pulitzer Prize- and Grammy Award-winning composer William Bolcom (*A View from the Bridge*, *A Wedding*), and renowned librettist Mark Campbell (*Silent Night*, *The Shining*) have created a winning new work that successfully weds American musical comedy and opera. Manhattan socialite Millicent Jordan plans a lavish dinner party for visiting English nobility, unaware that her guest list abounds with invitees linked by business intrigues and romantic entanglements.

—S.L. ■



Deathtrap. Artwork courtesy of Theatre in the Round

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# "Lessons From an Epidemic," Revisited

I recently discovered a personal time capsule of sorts. An article I wrote many years ago suddenly resurfaced. And its reappearance has given me a chance to revisit a dark time in my life, and a dark time in the life of the GLBT community and in the life of the leather community. The rediscovery of the article has given me a chance to consider, in some ways, how far we have come and, in other ways, how little progress has been made, how far we have yet to go.

In the summer of 1996 I wrote an article called "Lessons From An Epidemic." The article was published in *PWALive*, a publication of the Minnesota AIDS Project. That summer, the sense of despair and fatalism in the GLBT and leather communities was captured in the slogan on a T-shirt people were wearing: "All I want is the cure and my friends back." (You can still buy those shirts today.)

Recently, 20 summers later, I was reminded of this article by a historical researcher who happened upon it during his research. The researcher thanked me for writing it. He also noted that the summer 1996 issue of *PWALive* was the last issue printed, perhaps because the then-new drug cocktails had changed the landscape of the AIDS epidemic for the better.

Looking at this article again, 20 years after I wrote it, I was especially struck by the final paragraph of the article:

"Safe sex is no panacea, but it's all we've got for now. Any time I wear leather I have a black-and-white checked hanky, signifying 'safe sex,' sticking out of my back pocket. It's my statement that I believe a day will come when AIDS won't be the threat that it is now, when there will be both a cure and a vaccine — and I want to be around long enough to see that day. And I want the same thing for everyone else. If safer sex practices are what it takes for us to stop the spread of the virus — well, to paraphrase the L'Oréal ads, 'We're worth it.'"

Since I wrote that, some things have changed. For starters, the community health issue that used to be referred to as "AIDS" (the medical syndrome) is now more commonly referred to as "HIV" (the virus that can lead to the syndrome).

Another change since the summer of 1996 is that, thanks to continuing pharmaceutical research, many people infected with HIV are living longer and staying healthier, and that is cause for celebration. Another change: thanks to programs such as the Mr. Friendly campaign, the stigma surrounding HIV is nowhere near what it was in 1996.

But some things haven't changed. Twenty years later, I still have the black and white checked hanky sticking out of my back pocket because HIV is still out there. People are still being infected. Many people infected

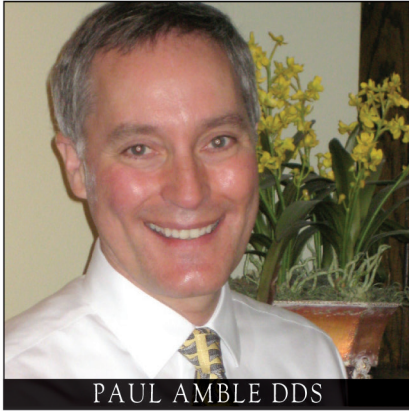
with HIV still don't have access to adequate medical treatment. People are still dying from AIDS-related illnesses. And while the stigma surrounding HIV has been reduced, it has not yet been eliminated.

In 1996, I wrote that I believed a day would come when there would be both a cure and a vaccine. Twenty years later, that day has not yet come. Instead of a cure, the best we have been able to do so far is drug regimens that have changed HIV infection from a death sentence into a "manageable" medical condition. Twenty years later, instead of a vaccine we have PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) and PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis). Both PEP and PrEP reduce the risk of being infected with HIV. But PrEP is much more expensive than a vaccine would be, and PrEP must be taken every day for years or decades to be effective.

Those are my thoughts on the last paragraph of that article. In the rest of the article I said that I had tried to draw some lessons from the epidemic so that the adversity would at least be good for something. The lessons I learned from the epidemic included taking responsibility for myself and my actions and appreciating the present rather than spending time worrying about the future. Those were good lessons to learn, and I have spent the last 20 years trying to live by those lessons. ■



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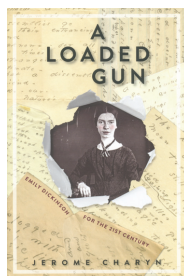
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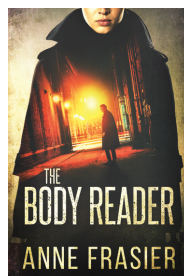
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***A Loaded Gun: Emily Dickinson for the 21st Century***  
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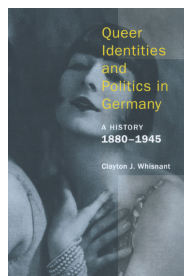
In the author's words, "I couldn't let go. I'd spent two years writing a novel about her, vampirizing her letters and poems, sucking the blood out of her bones, like some hunter of lost souls." And so, *The Secret Life of Emily Dickinson* gave rise to this volume. And like many before him Charyn has followed Dickinson as assiduously as Alice down the rabbit hole, forever in pursuit of a vanishing flounce of the Belle of Amherst's white skirt. This is not to say he doesn't put up a valiant pursuit, nor that he doesn't offer tantalizing glimpses of a maiden perhaps neither as virtuous nor as pliable as the reader has been made to believe. Is Dickinson gay? Read Charyn's fascinating thesis and decide.

***The Body Reader***  
Anne Frasier  
Thomas & Mercer  
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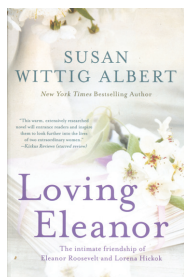
Detective Jude Fontaine is back on the job after her abduction and three years imprisonment in a basement cell somewhere in Minneapolis. How will her horrific experience affect her? Her new partner, Detective Uriah Ashby, harboring his own dark secrets, has grave doubts. But there's a deranged killer abroad who has already murdered several young women, and it seems Jude's knowledge of bodies, both the living and the dead, grants her understanding crucial to the case. Her talent also weaves into the dark fabric of her own family, pulling her unwillingly back into a toxic past she thought to have escaped. Frasier, writing also as Theresa Weir, the author of some 25 books of mystery and suspense, effectively draws the reader into this provocative tale.

***Queer Identities and Politics in Germany: A History 1880-1945***  
Clayton J. Whisnant  
Harrington Park Press  
\$40



While there are already a number of excellent studies of homosexuality in Germany, and Berlin in particular, during this period, Whisnant's book fills in a number of interesting and open areas as the author follows the "emergence of various 'queer identities' — what it means to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender ... and the political strategies pursued by early gay and lesbian activists." Strategies included creating the world's first homosexual organizations and queer magazines and scientific and sociological studies by sexologists and psychiatrists. Particularly illuminating are details of the Nazi absorption with homosexuality that led to persecution and the death of thousands of gay individuals in the camps. Whisnant goes beyond Berlin to examine queer society in cities such as Munich, Frankfurt, and Stuttgart.

***Loving Eleanor***  
Susan Wittig Albert  
Persevero Press  
\$14.99



At the beginning, there were rumors about the relationship between first lady Eleanor Roosevelt and AP reporter Lorena "Hick" Hickok. Using their correspondence of over 3,500 letters released in 1978, Albert mines them to create a moving, though sometimes one-sided, love story. Weaving imagined conversations with facts from the letters, Albert creates a solid, authentic voice for narrator Hickok, skillfully developing the Eleanor who grew from an awkward, gawky appendage of the larger-than-life FDR to a woman of the World. It is fascinating to watch Hickok using her own journalistic skills to create the very Eleanor who inevitably moved beyond as she learned to helm press conferences, write newspaper columns, and address nation-wide radio audiences. Albert's true subjects here are loving, changing, and rebuilding. ■



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## 2017 MINI Clubman



Back in 1959, Sir Alec Issigonis developed a revolutionary vehicle that would change the automotive business. His big contribution was to create a driveline that we now take for granted, moving the engine to a transmounted position, while creating a transmission/transaxle to drive the front wheels.

The result was a maximization of usable space for passengers and cargo. In a car of its size (a very small car that works in European cities and roads) maximum space utilization was the key to the success and adoration of this revolutionary car.

The Austin and Morris Mini became an icon of modern Britain. These cars were loved beyond the Isles; they were loved around the world. They were loved so much that the next revolution of Mini would be continued under the guidance of BMW Group. Therefore, the Mini simply became the MINI.

Three generations later, the MINI Cooper provided its owners a source of absolute joy. Small, but mighty, the brand took the energy of the Hardtop and expanded the lineup to include some pretty interesting models. The Coupe sat two and wore a backwards baseball cap as a roof. The Countryman showed that a MINI could be a crossover for the masses. They even expanded the crossover idea to a two-door version that reminded one of an enlarged Hardtop: the Paceman.

However, critics were concerned that MINI may have expanded a bit too much for consumers to grasp its product lines. For this latest generation of the Cooper, BMW went back to basics; yet,

they also introduced the idea of practicality to the lineup within the confines of the basic platform. The two-door Hardtop is joined by a four-door version. And, now it is joined by a new Clubman.

Some people might know that I do a lot of automotive history pieces in other outlets. Because of this, I wanted to bring up something that has been bugging me about the MINI Clubman. The Mini (Austin/Morris/et al.) always had a wagon with the split rear doors. That was known as the Traveler and the Countryman from 1961 to 1969. The name Clubman was given in 1969 for a Mini with a "modern" (for the late 1960s) front end. In fact, the Clubman did come in a wagon form, with two doors up front and the split two "barn doors" in the rear.

The previous MINI Clubman, introduced in 2008, came with two main doors, the split "barn doors" and an access door for the rear seats on one side. This time around, BMW gave the newest Clubman wagon four proper doors, while retaining the "barn doors" for cargo access.

Confused? It's quite simple, really. The new MINI Clubman was designed to be a MINI, but with optimal practicality.

The idea of optimal practicality starts with a longer body than the previous Clubman. The new Clubman stretches out to only 168.1 inches, which equals to a 12-inch increase in length from the previous model. In comparison to the four-door Hardtop model, the Clubman is ten inches longer. The wheelbase is long at 105.1 inches. This is done to increase the cabin space for rear seat passengers, enabling longer doors on each side compared to the four-door Hardtop. The split

"barn doors" open up to 90 degrees on each side. You can also open the "barn doors" by swinging your foot underneath the rear bumper.

The overall look of the Clubman starts with the new basic front end found on the current generation Hardtops. While the shape of the grille and headlamps retain the same look as the original "new" MINI of 2002, the overall shape is aggressive and rakish. The Cooper S adds a honeycomb grille with a deep lower bumper and air ducts. Our tester came with the John Cooper Works appearance package, adding deeper ground effects, specific 18-inch wheels, dual hood stripes, and added black trim all around.

The beauty of a MINI is the idea of personalizing a vehicle to the owner's imagination. Our Cooper S Clubman showed a sporting side with Chili Red paint, black roof, stripes, and trim. However, the Clubman comes in three non-metallic colors, eight metallic colors, a choice of four roof and mirror cap colors (including the main body color) and nine different seat upholstery choices. This is what attracts the kind of customers MINI wants to engage with.

Over the three generations of the current MINI, its cabin has evolved within the original themes laid down in 2002. The center speedometer has given way to MINI's infotainment screen: MINI Connected. The speedometer is now attached to the steering column, conjoined by the tachometer and fuel gauge. In the center dial is a switchable screen where the most necessary vehicle information resides, as controlled by a button on the left stalk. Toggles and buttons are scattered around the cabin, including on the roof.





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The ignition switch is a toggle in the middle of the lower center stack. While most vehicles offer straightforward design inside, MINI deviates from the norm by creating a unique, tangible, and fun setup for the driver to be engaged.

This Cooper S Clubman came with MINI's Connected XL infotainment system. Not only does it come with a larger screen, it also comes with a great navigation system. You can dial through the numbers and letters from the knob in the center console, or trace each number and letter on the same Touch Controller. All of the controls for the Connected XL system is right on the center console, therefore, it is not a touch screen. There are even some fun graphics to see, as well. MINI provides SiriusXM, HD radio, and Bluetooth connectivity, but it is not compatible with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto currently. HarmonKardon supplied a fantastic set of speakers to emit a well-balanced and distortion-free sound throughout the cabin.

In this tester, we had a pair of manually controlled sports seats that provided excellent comfort and great support with deep bolstering, a perfectly sized cushion and seatback. Rear seat room is achievable, even with a larger seating area than in the Hardtop models. You can have average adults sit in the back, but headroom may be limited for taller persons. Cargo space is expandable to 47.9 cubic feet with the rear seat down from a solid 17.5 cubic feet "boot." There is underfloor storage that helps hide key items from view, even when you have a cargo cover that slides out of

the way.

Like the Hardtop, the Clubman comes with two engine choices. The standard Cooper is powered by a 1.5-liter turbocharged three-cylinder engine, good for 134 horsepower. The real choice in power is the Cooper S and its 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine. This Twinpower engine offers 189 horsepower of solid performance with 207 pound-feet of torque. Our tester came with an eight-speed automatic transmission that is smooth shifting and responsive through its three drive modes: Green, Mid, and Sport. You can also get one with a six-speed manual transmission. New for 2017 is the ALL4 all-wheel drive system that is found on the Countryman and Paceman crossover models. With increased traction and a peppy driveline, one could understand why MINI owners found their cars to be absolutely fun to drive. In terms of fuel economy, this tester yielded an average of 25.0 MPG.

MINIs are known to be great handling cars. Their lower center of gravity, short wheelbase and short travel suspensions garnered the reputation of a driving similar to a go-kart. The Clubman has a stretched wheelbase of 105.1 inches, which also adds another dimension to the mix: a solid ride. Even in Sport mode, the suspension did not feel any harder than it looks. It corners flat through the turns, but works hard to absorb the road the best it can. Steering is solid on-center and sharp when you get it through tight maneuvers. Sport mode weighs down steering feel and enhances driver control. Stopping power is ex-

cellent with a four-disc, anti-lock system. Expect super sharp stops in both normal and panic situations with excellent pedal feel and feedback.

This tester came with a reversing camera, but no other active safety features on board. You can add Adaptive Cruise Control and a Heads-Up display to the Clubman.

For a Cooper Clubman with the turbocharged three-cylinder engine, you can get one starting at \$24,100. The Cooper S Clubman ALL4 we tested had a base price of \$29,450. All told, with several packages, including the John Cooper Works Appearance Package, the final sticker price came to \$39,955.

There is no question how much this MINI Clubman seems just right for us. The brand had been marketing this wagon as a vehicle for everyone, including those of us who "defy labels." If you think you are just buying a MINI, then you have not experienced the complete owner experience. Everyone from the dealership to the brand marketing people are engaged in ensuring that you have the best experience with the car. I witnessed this when the biannual owner engagement event MINI Takes The States came through the Twin Cities in July. You can see how engaged and enthusiastic MINI owners truly are. It is not just a car; it is an experience that is enjoyable and fun.

This leads to something even more important: the car itself. The MINI Clubman is joy wrapped up in a unique package that engages everyone who pilots it, no matter who you are. ■

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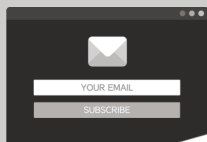


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# Laramie

I've written before of how the Twin Cities is a GLBT "bubble" where the sight of two mommies or two daddies pushing a baby stroller along the Stone Arch Bridge produces strangers' smiles and cooing remarks. For many in the metro, another person's queerness makes no difference.

Thus, it's so easy to forget that much of America isn't like the Twin Cities; a majority of states lack GLBT protections, meaning that Supreme Court-sanctioned same-sex marriage doesn't trump (what a word) a landlord's ability to refuse renting to gay newlyweds.

It was against this backdrop that, in early August, I drove across a good chunk of the Midwest to speak about "Gray Area Thinking™," a toolset I've devised for how to welcome people who are "different" from "us." While my ultimate destination was central Wyoming for a family reunion, I wanted to make the 1100-mile road trip into something meaningful by publicly speaking in states where I, a bisexual transgender person, have no legal rights. Hence, as I made my way west, I stopped to talk at the GLBT center in Sioux Falls and the Rapid City Public Library, experiences I've written about in my blog at [www.elliekrug.com](http://www.elliekrug.com).

My last stop was Laramie, home to the University of Wyoming, and a town with a non-student population of 30,000.

For anyone who's GLBT, "Laramie" should automatically equate to "Matthew Shepard" and *The Laramie Project*.

As a reminder, in October 1998 Matthew was an "out" 21-year-old University of Wyoming student who met two men posing as gay at a bar in downtown Laramie. Matthew left the bar with the men; as soon as they got into a pickup truck, one of the men produced a gun and pistol-whipped Matthew. The men then took Matthew to a rural area just outside of town and beat him mercilessly, after which they tied him to a fence and drove away. Eighteen hours later, a cyclist discovered Matthew, barely alive with a fractured skull. Matthew lingered in a coma for six days until he died.

Matthew's killers were later convicted and each is now serving a life prison sentence.

As I drove into Laramie, I wondered what effect Matthew's death, and the international outrage and notoriety it produced, had on the town. Would Laramie have owned up to internal homophobia and become a welcoming bubble?

I learned that in some ways, yes, but in other ways definitely no.

On the positive side, Laramie has the only GLBT-protective city ordinance in Wyoming, although it wasn't adopted until May 2015, nearly 17 years after Matthew's murder.

Additionally, the University has the Rainbow Resource Center, a GLBT



Photo by Ellen Krug

safe zone. Moreover, while the city lacks a gay bar, beginning in early 2016, a downtown (straight) bar began hosting a biweekly "GLBT Night" during the months the University is in session. A promo states, "(t)hese nights will provide a much-needed environment for folks to be themselves, without fear of judgment or social consequences."

As for my personal experience, I found the Laramie public library extremely open to the idea of me speaking and it even promoted the event

with a flyer that library staff created. Although my talk was attended by just five people, I was reassured that more persons would have attended had it not been the University's summer break.

Still, the most significant takeaway about Laramie was how it has handled the memory of Matthew Shepard.

On the day following my talk, I Googled "Matthew Shepard Memorial" only to find that there is no memorial per se. Rather, Google pointed to a commemorative plaque on a bench located on the University campus. A related article reported that town officials had renamed the road on which Matthew had been beaten so that it would be more difficult for outsiders to find.

As I later walked the University campus and spotted not one, but dozens of benches that all looked alike, I asked a group of groundskeepers, "Where can I find Matthew Shepard's bench?"

Two of the men I addressed had no idea of what I was talking about. A third man pointed across the quad toward a sciences building.

I found Matthew's bench and was overcome with great sadness. A human had died so early in his life just for living authentically and, for that, his community could offer nothing more than a nondescript bench with a plaque.

After clicking a couple pictures, I stood quietly and tried to imagine the horror that Matthew experienced nearly two decades ago. Beaten, bleeding, and left for dead, did Matthew struggle to look up at a starry October night's sky and ask, "Why?"

I then wondered how things might be different if more people in Laramie (and other non-GLBT bubbles) let themselves imagine Matthew in the same way. ■

*Ellen (Ellie) Krug is the author of Getting to Ellen: A Memoir about Love, Honesty and Gender Change (2013). She frequently speaks and trains on diversity and inclusion topics; visit her website at [www.elliekrug.com](http://www.elliekrug.com). She welcomes your comments at [ellenkrugwriter@gmail.com](mailto:ellenkrugwriter@gmail.com).*

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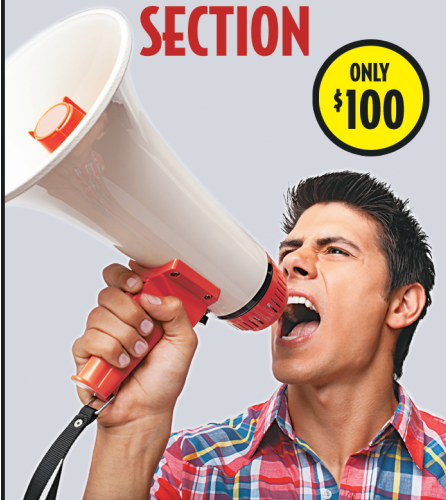
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# Wildlife

I came home this morning to find a raccoon in my house. I wish I could say that this is an unusual experience.

I have a dog door that leads from my back porch to my yard. It's designed to allow my dogs to come and go as they please. This system worked well for several years when I was living at the house full-time. My three dogs noisily patrolled the perimeter of the yard, chasing intruders, and keeping my home free from varmints.

I'd often spot critters in the wooded areas just beyond my fence, staring wistfully into the yard, longing for entrée. I never understood what they hoped to find within my boundaries and why they were so determined to break in. It's not like the lawn is slathered in peanut butter and honey.

The dogs kept nature under control until last year when something very unnatural happened: I fell in love. Then all hell broke loose.

The problem with being in love is that it makes you want to make concessions to please your beloved. So I merrily agreed to abandon my carefree life in a lakeside resort community and move 90 miles away to an ultra-progressive suburb where even non-lesbians drive Subarus.

The dogs, of course, came with me, leaving my home vulnerable to vengeful beasts. It didn't take long for them to begin their assault.

It started charmingly enough. A robin built a nest directly above my front door. Squirrels quickly recognized a breakdown of defenses and set up camp in my gardening shed. They now dart in and out of the shed through a small hole in the wall, planting their flag more firmly with each acorn they stockpile in their arsenal. Chipmunks have become so confident in their station that they no longer manically tear across the landscape. Instead, they stroll languidly.

Then came a very aggressive community of bees that do not seem to appreciate that I have a Save the Bees bumper sticker on my hybrid SUV. They hate me and I suspect they are not lifting one finger to do anything to save the planet. I have yet to see one of them bother to pollinate anything. They're like a bunch of ineffectual, cranky Commies, drunk with bitterness and screaming about the bourgeoisie but refusing to make the minimal effort to improve their own plight.

And then there are the moles. I never believed that moles really existed. I thought they were something created by Scientology to make us believe that the Earth is ruled by a subterranean superclass of monsters with inconspicuous eyes and shovel hands. But now I know they are real. They have created an elaborate tunneling system under my yard, making it as spongy as the surface of the moon.

Of all the wildlife, the raccoons are the most talented at breaking into the house, but they are also the least destructive and the most respectful. When they manage to pry open the locked dog door, they make only surgical strikes on foodstuffs. They'll pull a box of cereal from a cabinet, neatly emptying it into their gullets, leaving only the empty box as evidence that they had visited.

Only my stray cat, Mittens, remains on full-time duty. We'll return on the weekends to find him lying in the front yard too exhausted to even whack the moles that occasionally pop up from their underground lairs, which used to be his favorite hobby.

And even this weak defense is about to crumble. My beloved wants to move Mittens to the suburbs. And Mittens, who, like me, had long been reluctant to let anyone tame him, seems ready to give up the wild life and become domesticated. ■

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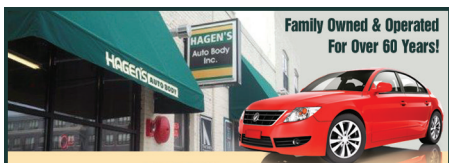
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# 5 Female Heroes Over 50



**Carrie Fisher.** Photo courtesy of Bigstock.com/Starfrenzy



**Debbie Harry.** Photo courtesy of Bigstock.com/Debby Wong



**Joanna Lumley.** Photo by David Appleby



**Barbara Satin.** Photo by Sophia Hantzes



**Lori Barbero.** Photo by David Endicott

The building I work out of is shared with a summer camp program called Sisters of Sound, part of a larger nonprofit called She Rock, dedicated to empowering girls, women, and female-identified folks through the art of music. It's a pretty incredible experience for middle- and high school-aged young women to better themselves as musicians and as people in a community that is inclusive to all gender identities, learning styles, and walks of life. She Rock is a standout organization in the Twin Cities for its ability to challenge young women in the pursuit of their musical craft, while educating and inspiring them with the legacy of rock music, a genre that is all the more inspiring for its feminist implications as well.

With an ageist media landscape that is undoubtedly harsh on women over 50, there is something truly important about the continued legacy of bands like Joan Jett and the Black Hearts, Sleater Kinney, and our own Babes in Toyland. Young girls of today need powerful and non-conforming female celebrities to look up to. While youth and beauty have always been key factors in our culture's barometer of fame and success, the age of our teen idols seems to be taking a startling turn for the younger. It is a problem just as relevant in music as it is in Hollywood. Women over 50 in film and television fight to maintain relevance, while their male co-stars continue to be cast alongside actresses playing their wives and girlfriends that are significantly younger.

It's a big topic to cover in one article. It's a lot of a work that needs to be done. But, in short, I believe there to be a lot of underrated greatness in some of my own celebrity obsessions. Below, I've listed my five favorite grown-ass women. Their ages are irrelevant; I'm obsessed with them for the legacies that they continue to develop for their community and the young women who will follow them.

## Carrie Fisher, 59

The fearless Carrie Fisher is best known for her role as Princess Leia in the *Star Wars* saga, but in addition to her role on screen, Fisher is an award-winning published author, script doctor, and comedian. Fisher has also been outspoken about her struggles with drug abuse and mental illness. Her demeanor on talk shows is often awkward, but always terrifically candid. I am obsessed with Carrie Fisher because she's a galactic space princess whose frankness about her personal struggles is refreshing to watch.

## Debbie Harry, 71

Blondie frontwoman Debbie Harry is still touring and selling out venues into her 70s. The musical legend refuses to retire and, while she hasn't released an album since 2007, Harry continues to perform live and support organizations that fight cancer and endometriosis. I

am obsessed with Debbie Harry because she defies the norms of aging and continues to give back to her fans and her community at large.

## Joanna Lumley, 70

Any fan of the British comedy *Absolutely Fabulous* is a fan of Joanna Lumley. The entire premise of the show revolves around Lumley behaving like a twentysomething party girl in the pursuit of staying young and "hip." While entirely in jest, the sitcom's widespread success in the '90s was significant for being one of the only television shows in history that showed middle-aged women smoking, heavy drinking, and partying. While her character in *Absolutely Fabulous* is a revered hero for all the wrong reasons, Lumley in real life is heroic for reasons quite the antithesis. Lumley's work as a philanthropist is extensive. Lumley spent years campaigning and working behind the scenes with Gurkha Justice and Work for Survival International, two organizations that work to right injustices done by the British to people of Nepal and India. She has also been a patron of countless organizations that improve health care and education for marginalized and disadvantaged communities around the globe. I am obsessed with Lumley because of the dichotomy between her reckless no-fucks-given sense of humor and her relentless activism on an international scale. Lumley is, quite literally, the best of both worlds.

## Barbara Satin, 82

It's hard not to admire the St. Paul-born Satin, who was recently appointed by President Obama to the Advisory Council on Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. Satin previously served as the first openly transgender person on the council of the United Church of Christ, an organization with over 5,000 churches and one million members across the country. I am obsessed with Barbara Satin for her ability to challenge and inspire political and religious communities that are notoriously difficult places for a transgender voice to permeate.

## Lori Barbero, 54

Our own Minneapolis-grown Lori Barbero is the drummer of Babes in Toyland, an all-female punk rock band formed in 1987 which received incredible mainstream success in the mid-1990s. After disbanding in 2001, the band reunited just two years ago and has started rocking out once more. Barbero is an active member of the music scene in the Twin Cities and supports local music and local artists relentlessly. Barbero was even awarded the Artist of Distinction award by Sound Unseen for her contributions to the local rock and roll scene. I'm obsessed with Lori Barbero because she has a heart of gold and can rock out like no other. ■



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